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Data from questionnaires distributed to the principals of all public schools in Philadelphia indicated the extent to which courses in African and Afro-American history were made available to students in the 1967-68 academic year. Forty-eight percent of public school students (over 135,000 of the total 280,000 enrollment) were exposed to Black History either at the secondary or elementary school levels. Among secondary school students, 1% were enrolled in separate Black History courses and 73% were exposed to this subject interwoven with other courses (a total of 78,000 students). At the elementary school level, 30% (58,100 students) of the enrollment attended classes where Black History was combined with the regular course of study. Telecasts on Black History reached about seven in 10 secondary students and four in 10 elementary students. After-school club periods making use of Black History were offered at 18 secondary and 12 elementary schools. (LH)

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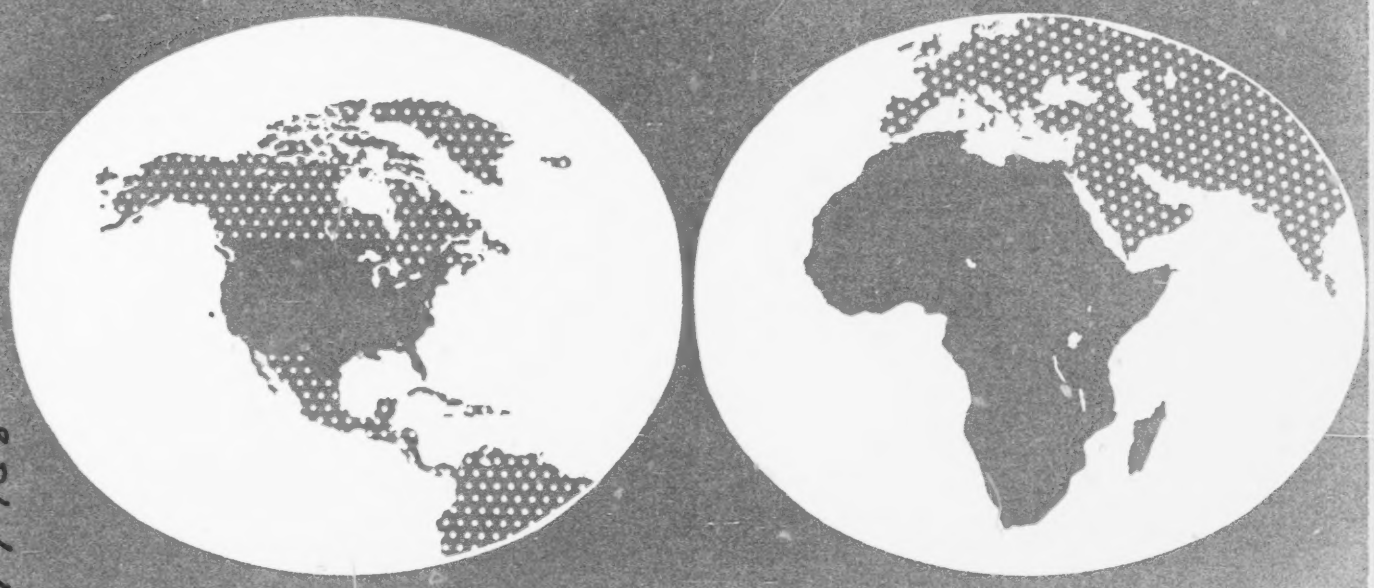
The teaching of AFRICAN and AFRO AMERICAN HISTORY in the Philadelphia Public Schools

1967/68 Academic Year



TE 499 958

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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FOREWORD

On November 17, 1967, large numbers of Black students from the public schools of Philadelphia demonstrated before the School District's Administration Building and presented a list of grievances to the Superintendent of Schools.

Chief among these grievances was the failure of the School District to provide adequate instruction in African and Afro-American history in the curriculum at all grade levels.

In response to this concern, the Superintendent of Schools established an Ad Hoc Committee to make recommendations to the Administration in matters affecting the lives of Black students, including the teaching of African and Afro-American history.

The Committee was organized cooperatively by the Department of Superintendence, Office of Instructional Services, and the Office of Intergration and Intergroup Education. Membership on the committee includes representatives from the adult Black community, Black and White high school students, school principals, and other school officials.

In mid-May, 1968, the Ad Hoc Committee requested the Division of Administrative and Survey Research, of the Office of Research and Evaluation, to find out the extent to which all public schools in Philadelphia had incorporated the teaching of Black history into their pro-

grams. Mr. Omar Sey, a member of the Committee and a student at Temple University from the Gambia in Western Africa, was appointed to work with Dr. Jack Schwartz of The Division of Administrative and Survey Research in the construction of a survey questionnaire which would be distributed to the principals of all public schools in the City.

The questionnaire was mailed to principals in mid-May, 1968, and within a month replies had been received from all schools in the City.

A detailed report based on the survey results was submitted to the Committee on July 16, 1968. Preliminary reports, based upon results received to that time were presented to the Committee on May 23 and June 3, 1968.

The more detailed report was carefully reviewed by the Committee. That report substantiated the need not only for increased curriculum activities at specific schools, but also for additional staff development in the field of African and Afro-American history. Advanced seminars, involving department chairmen, social science teachers, principals, and other administrators have been, and are being planned. In addition, a day long session planned for January, 1969, will bring together teachers, principals, students, and members of the Home and School Council for a full review of new programs. Furthermore, a new curriculum resources guide is being prepared which utilized in part the more detailed report as benchmark informa-

tion upon which expanded resources are being developed. Finally, the Ad Hoc Committee felt that the survey findings indicated a clear need for professional staff in the curriculum office who would work exclusively in this area.

This brochure presents the highlights from the detailed report already given to the Ad Hoc Committee. This particular study is part of a broad program of survey research, begun in the 1967-68 school year by the Division of Administrative and Survey Research of the Office of Research and Evaluation, which eventually will reach all groups of teachers and administrators, pupils and parents, and the community at large.

The Office of Research and Evaluation wishes to express its sincere appreciation to those school principals who participated in this survey.

Daniel R. Fascione
Director for
Administrative and
Survey Research

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Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Bernard C. Watson
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Executive Director for Research and Evaluation

Separate courses in

BLACK HISTORY

at the secondary level:
Sr. High, Jr. High

YES	NO
24 Schools	28 Schools
46%	54%

Schools offering separate courses in Black history.

Enrollment in courses: 1,350 students.

3.5% of total enrollment at schools offering separate courses.

1.0% of total enrollment at all secondary schools in city.

Average class size in course:

24 students

Average Black enrollment in course: **77%**

Course offered 5 periods per week:

4 schools

Course offered 2 periods per week:

20 schools

According to the survey, all courses in Black history, except at three secondary schools, were offered to students during normal school hours. One school offered Black history courses both during the regular school day and in the evening.

There was no consistent pattern indicated in the grade level at which Black history courses were available. Half of the 24 schools offering the course made it available to all grades taught at the school; among the remaining schools, about as many offered the course at the lowest, highest, or intermediate grade levels taught at the school.

In contrast to the 24 secondary schools which offered courses in Black history, 28 secondary schools did not offer the course in the 1967-68 academic year. Significantly, one-third of the schools not offering the course had an enrollment of 80 percent or more Black students.

BLACK HISTORY

interwoven into other courses* at secondary schools

(*courses not exclusively devoted to African and Afro-American history)

secondary students enrolled in other courses in which Black history is interwoven

YES	NO
73%	26%

With very few exceptions, at least one-half of the students enrolled in every secondary school were taking at least one course which blended Black history into the subject matter.

In fact, at 23 secondary schools (or 44% of the total number of secondary schools in the City), a full one hundred percent of the student body were reported enrolled in courses incorporating Black history into its regular curriculum.

However, at two schools, with almost total Black enrollments, Black history was presented to a small minority of students.

When Black history was blended into other courses, this history most often was interwoven into American or world history, world culture, social studies, or geography. However, some schools incorporated Black history into science, literature, home economics, art, music, woodworking, and physical education courses.

BLACK HISTORY

in the elementary schools

YES	NO
122* Schools	76 Schools
62%	38%

*58,100 elementary students (30% of total elementary enrollment) reported exposed to Black history.

Among those elementary schools which did interweave Black history into the curriculum, 84 percent did so in their social studies programs. Among the remaining schools, Black history was reported to have been blended into programs in a wide variety of areas, especially in art, music, and the language arts.

The survey showed that 65 percent of the City's elementary school children were not exposed to Black history interwoven into the curriculum. It is important to note that in all schools reporting no specific interweaving of Black history into the curriculum, at least some students were exposed to television programs on Black history presented by the School District.

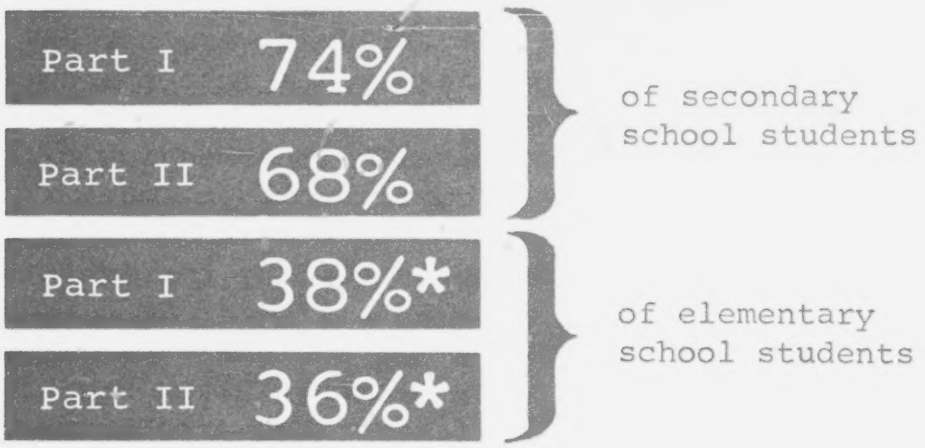
At 45 of the elementary schools reporting no interweaving of Black history, Black students constitute a majority of the enrollment.

The School District's

Television Series: Roots, Resistance, Renaissance

During the weeks of April 22 and 29, 1968, Channel 12 broadcast the first two parts in a series of telecasts on Black history developed by the School District of Philadelphia. An advance letter to all principals directed that the telecasts be shown to all junior and senior high school students as well as to elementary school students at the fifth and sixth grade levels.

Telecasts seen by:



*Figures significantly greater than 25% of elementary enrollment in 5th and 6th grade.

Some materials used

in teaching

BLACK HISTORY

Teachers were reported to use a wide variety of books and materials in the teaching of Black history. In the present study, questions were raised about only a few very specific reference materials. Of course, the form and scope of use for any single work or medium will vary widely from one teacher and school to another, thus statistical references should be taken only as a general index of the use made of each item.

	Used by Elemantary Schools	Used by Secondary Schools
Guides for Telecasts	87%	96%
"African Culture" by School District	67%	94%
"Lost Cities of Africa" by Davidson	29%	50%
"A Glorious Age in Africa" by Daniel & Skinner	29%	50%

	Used by Elementary Schools	Used by Secondary Schools
"Great Rulers of African Past" by Dobler & Brown	21%	17%
"The World and Africa" by DuBois	12%	7%
FILMS	33%	46%
FILMSTRIPS	33%	69%

CLUB PERIODS making use of Black History reported at

18 Secondary Schools. Clubs attended by 3300 students (7% of schools' enrollment). Black students attending - same or greater percent than schools' Black enrollment.

12 Elementary Schools. Attended by 10% of schools' enrollment. Black students attending - same percent as schools' Black enrollment.

SUMMARY

Over 135,000 public school students in Philadelphia, or 48 percent of the total 280,000 enrollment, were reported as exposed to African and Afro-American History last year -- either as a separate course in the secondary schools, or as an interwoven part of the curriculum either at the secondary or elementary school levels.

One percent of the secondary school students were enrolled in separate courses devoted exclusively to Black History. In addition, 73 percent were reported exposed to this history interwoven into other courses. A total of 78,500 secondary school students were thus exposed to Black History.

At the elementary school level, about 58,100 students, or 30 percent of total elementary enrollment, attended classes with Black History combined with the regular course of study.

Telecasts on Black History developed by the School District reached about seven in ten secondary students, and about four in ten elementary students last spring.

After-school club periods making use of Black History were offered at 18 secondary, and 12 elementary, schools.